Wed. 23rd April 1873

My dear Maria

I have just had a most affectionate letter from my Arthur in which he assures me that he will always send you 10£ on the quarter day & also do any thing you may chance to need & that his excellent wife is to look to this so I think I may be quite content about you. As to your deafness I am afraid I cannot say much except that I was formerly somewhat deaf but I have got quite well owing to my having for some years used an Ear-pic daily & so extracted a little wax continually - this is a tweezer at one end & the pic at the other. I think this has given me good hearing - I never miss it, for you see the wax stops up the ear at times particularly when it is liquid & then it after becomes hard like a stone & actually suspends all hearing. This happened to me once & after great efforts I got the wax stone out & my hearing came back all at once since I have never ceased to keep my ears clean in this way & have now a tolerable good hearing This tweezer was given me by an Italian P. & I never knew about it before, you will easily get it

at the Cutlers, but you must use it discreetly so as not to hurt the inside of the ear

The Bride (Arthurs Joan) has been suffering from an abscess in the left breast, but is now nearly well you say truly, what a family of Grandchildren I have for I now reckon 18 - what a delight it would be if they were all to come & visit me at once as I cannot visit them, for the least cold upsets me & I have only just left off the bottle of hot water for my feet in bed - but I shall soon be in the charming Summer & hope to go to my dear Folfa & take the Baths - the Doctor & his ladies will also go, I think I cannot do better for I persuade myself that I shall get strong for I am better than ever, but I dont attempt to do any thing that is beyond me - I can now dress myself comfortably & get up at 6, enjoy the morning air - & dine at 2 oclock, my eye sight is still good for any amount of painting or reading but I am disposed to be very very idle !!

Now I hope you'll soon write me another nice letter & always believe me your loving brother

Joe